



County of Los Angeles CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

713 KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION • LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
(213) 974-1101
<http://cao.lacounty.gov>

DAVID E. JANSSEN
Chief Administrative Officer

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Second District

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Third District

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Fifth District

June 25, 2007

To: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

SACRAMENTO UPDATE

Pursuit of County Position on Legislation

AB 1275 (DeSaulnier), as amended on June 20, 2007, would authorize a county board of supervisors to increase the fees for certified copies of birth, marriage, and death certificates by up to \$4, upon making findings supporting the need for governmental coordination of multiple agencies dealing with domestic violence. The funds collected must be used for the oversight and coordination of the county's domestic violence, child abuse, and family violence prevention, intervention and prosecution efforts. The bill does not specify an entity or account to which the funds would be allocated. Any county electing to increase fees under this bill would be required to submit an annual report to the Assembly and Senate Judiciary Committees addressing the funds received and outcome achieved.

The bill would also allow counties to authorize additional fee increases annually in an amount equal to the Consumer Price Index and to establish a separate fee that would be paid to the county registrar recorder or county clerk by persons requesting copies of vital records. Effective July 1, 2010, any county electing to increase fees for copies of vital records would be required to submit an annual report to the Assembly and Senate Judiciary Committees containing the amount of funds received, the amount expended and outcomes achieved.

Under current law, Alameda, Contra Costa and Solano Counties have authority to increase vital record fees to operate and coordinate domestic violence programs. AB 1275 would expand this authority statewide as a county option. As noted in the Assembly Judiciary Committee analysis of AB 1275: "As a result of the increased funding, Contra Costa County has been able to increase funding for a coordinated system and for individual agencies to: increase system wide accountability; increase batterer accountability; and increase protections for victims and children. Prior to the fee increase, individual agencies did not work together smoothly, but the funding increase has permitted the County to operate an efficient coordinated system."

According to the Registrar Recorder/County Clerk's office, over 1 million copies of birth, marriage and death certificates were requested in 2006. If fees were increased up to the \$4 maximum allowed under AB 1275, over \$4 million would be available annually to fund domestic violence coordination efforts in Los Angeles County. The Registrar Recorder/County Clerk has expressed concerns that AB 1275 would adversely impact the public seeking copies of vital records and create a precedent for continued fee increases. The Department's position on AB 1275 is neutral.

The Department of Public Health notes that while many local government agencies provide domestic violence services, increased coordination is needed. The Department of Children and Family Services opines that because AB 1275 does not specify how funds are to be used, the County would have the flexibility to develop oversight and coordination efforts that would specifically address domestic violence in Los Angeles County. The Departments of Children and Family Services, Community and Senior Services, Mental Health and Public Health recommend that the County support AB 1275 because the bill would give the Board of Supervisors the option to create a new source of revenue to address and reduce domestic violence, and we concur.

Consistent with existing Board policy to support increased funding for services to domestic violence victims and to support legislation to promote coordination and collaboration between the various agencies providing domestic violence services, **our Sacramento advocates will support AB 1275.** Support for AB 1275 also is consistent with Board action on July 2, 2002 to support SB 1618 (Kuehl), which would have increased the portion of the marriage license fee for domestic violence shelters from \$23 to \$33. SB 1618 failed passage on the Assembly Floor.

AB 1275 is supported by Contra Costa and Santa Clara Boards of Supervisors, Lambda Letters Project and the Los Angeles County District Attorney. The bill is opposed by the County Records Association of California and the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association.

The bill passed the Assembly on May 29, 2007, by a vote of 47 to 31, and is currently awaiting a hearing in the Senate Local Government Committee.

SB 137 (Torlakson), as amended on March 21, 2007, would increase the income eligibility cap for the California Children's Services (CCS) program from \$40,000 adjusted gross income (AGI), to 400 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL), which is \$82,600 for a family of four. It provides no additional funding for this purpose.

The CCS Program provides medical care and medical therapy for children with certain physical limitations and chronic health conditions or diseases such as leukemia, congenital heart disease, and muscular dystrophy. The county share of cost for the basic CCS program is 50 percent and the state is responsible for the remaining 50 percent. Children in the Healthy Families Program are automatically deemed eligible for CCS if they have any eligible condition. The county share of cost for Healthy Families/CCS children is 17.5 percent for families with an AGI under \$40,000.

A recent Senate Appropriations Committee analysis estimated that about 16,400 cases will become eligible for CCS under SB 137, and that most of these cases will be in the basic program funded 50 percent by the state and 50 percent by counties. The analysis indicated that total treatment costs for these cases would be approximately \$41 million and administrative and case management costs would be about \$9.5 million.

The Department of Public Health (DPH) and Department of Health Services (DHS) advise that SB 137 would result in cost increases in every aspect of the County's CCS program: administrative, programmatic, and operational. DPH and DHS indicate that under the proposed 400 percent FPL limit, there are likely to be hundreds of newly financially eligible patients each year, and the County will incur 50 percent of the total cost of caring for their eligible condition. On average, this will amount to about \$1,500 per year per patient. Administrative and case management costs also will increase. DPH and DHS estimate that there are likely to be about 800 newly eligible patients per year, which will increase to several thousand total patients added to the CCS Program. DPH and DHS conservatively estimate that these additional costs would total \$1.5 million annually in the short term and rise to at least \$15 million annually over time.

DPH and DHS recommend that the County oppose SB 137 unless amended to exempt counties from the additional costs resulting from this proposed eligibility expansion for CCS, and we concur. **Consistent with existing Board policy to oppose unfunded mandates, our Sacramento advocates will oppose SB 137.**

SB 137 is sponsored by the Children's Specialty Care Coalition and supported by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees AFL-CIO, California Nurses Association, Family Voices of California, Lambda Letters Project, and the March of Dimes. It is opposed by the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association and the California Department of Finance. The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) and County Health Executives Association of California oppose SB 137 unless amended to waive county costs for CCS program expenditure increases resulting from this measure, but have been advised by the author's staff that the amendment is not acceptable.

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SB 137 passed the Senate Floor on June 4, 2007 by a vote of 24 to 13 and is now scheduled for a hearing on June 27, 2007 in the Assembly Health Committee.

We will continue to keep you advised.

DEJ:GK
MAL:MS:hg

c: All Department Heads
Legislative Strategist
Local 660
Coalition of County Unions
California Contract Cities Association
Independent Cities Association
League of California Cities
City Managers Associations
Buddy Program Participants